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# In Memoriam

Mrs. MARY A. K. WALKER.



# ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

The Rev. ALBERT DONNELL,

AT THE

FUNERAL

OF

MRS. MARY A. K. WALKER,

*Widow of the Rev. Geo. F. Walker,*  
AT

WELLFLEET, MASS.,

MARCH 10, 1897.

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MARY ANN KEMP WALKER

SEPT. 1, 1838—MARCH 8, 1897.





## ADDRESS.

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*The former things are passed away.—Rev. 21 : 4.*

THESE are words with which we may comfort ourselves to-day. They are from St. John's description of the heavenly life. The words are full of comfort because in the passing away of the former things she for whom we mourn has been delivered from the weaknesses, sicknesses, sufferings, the fears, anxieties and sorrows of the life on earth. The words are also full of comfort because with the passing away of the former things the love, the loyalty, the truth, the charity for others, the faith in and obedience to God that characterized her life,—with the passing away of the former things, these things are delivered from the incompleteness and imperfection which must ever attend our best efforts while in the flesh, and now seeing Him as

He is she can realize the completeness of her desire and come to be wholly like the Saviour whom she loved and served.

MARY A. K. ATWOOD was born in Wellfleet, Sept. 1, 1838, and was the youngest child of the five sons and four daughters who made glad the home of Simeon and Ruth Atwood. The family was one of those that are a credit to the community from which they spring, and which have gained for New England her honorable place in the nation and the world. The parents were people of ability, thrift and energy, and were able not only to suitably provide for themselves and their own, but also to lay up in store for those who were to come after them. All the children excepting one daughter who died in infancy have attained to useful and influential positions in the communities where they have made their homes. Of the eight who attained to maturity one brother died several years ago, and now the youngest has been taken, and that at a time when, because of the

maturity and balance of her judgment, the leisure of her life, and the means at her command she, living, might bless the world for many years. After a brief but severe sickness, she passed from life at quarter of five in the morning of March 8, 1897, dying of heart disease in the home of her brother-in-law, Thomas Kemp, in Wellfleet.

Like the other members of the family Mary Atwood passed her girlhood and younger womanhood in the town of her birth, attending the town schools, mingling in the village life. In the schools she held high rank and showed more than ordinary abilities as a scholar. In the social life of the community she took her part with dignity and grace.

Mary Atwood was one who could and did think for herself, but still was not independent of the influence of her surroundings. This is shown by her religious life. She always was of a deeply religious and spiritual nature, but the thought of the time and community was not

such as favored anything of precociousness in piety. It was believed and taught that the religious stand that one takes incident to becoming a member of the church is one that is to be taken only by those whose years and experience enable them to fully realize the meaning, importance and dignity of the step taken. Accordingly it was not until she was in her twenty-sixth year that Mary Atwood made public confession of her faith by uniting with the First Congregational Church of Wellfleet on Jan. 3, 1864. And from that day until the end she ever walked in a manner that was worthy of the calling wherewith she was called, and her life adorned the gospel of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

She was what some one has oddly but not inappropriately called "an old fashioned Christian." She loved her Bible and read it, and that not in fragments or in a few select passages. Those who knew her best do not know that she had a favorite book of the Bible. It was her

rule and practice to begin at the beginning and read the volume through to the end, and then when the volume was finished to begin and read it again. And she loved the hour of worship. The prayer meeting and the church service were places in which her soul delighted, and her interest and pleasure did not depend on numbers or on what is commonly called enthusiasm but on the spirit of devotion there was in the gathering. The different organizations through which the women promote the welfare of the church also were subjects that called forth her active zeal. She was glad to teach in the Sunday School, and in her dealings with her scholars manifested piety and patience tempered with common sense. In the ladies' circles she showed an industry and spirit of sacrifice that was equalled by few and excelled by none. And when special opportunities for service presented themselves she always was ready to enter the open doors, as is witnessed to by sewing schools and bands for

special work or study that she organized in different fields.

Even in entering that relation in the forming of which principle is too often let go to the winds, the relation, the entering of which is often controlled by pride, or pleasure, or passion, Mary Walker manifested the purity of her heart and the piety of her spirit. In entering the marriage state she not only was chosen but she chose, and in speaking of the approaching nuptials she said to a brother, that many might think it strange that she should wed the man she did, but her choice had been controlled by the realization that the companionship of the spiritual minded was necessary to her true earthly happiness.

In 1866 the Rev. George F. Walker, then pastor of the First Congregational Church of Wellfleet, and Mary A. K. Atwood were united in marriage, and the union of hand and heart and spirit, then happily begun, constantly grew deeper, stronger, sweeter, until it was broken

by Mr. Walker's death twenty-eight years later. And now the two are to sleep side by side, for on the morrow her dust is to be committed to the dust in a lot procured by Mr. Walker many years ago in Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge.

The position of pastor's wife is one of greatest difficulty, delicacy and dignity. While the pastor's wife is by her position set apart from the people she, nevertheless, is one of the people, and that in a sense impossible to be attained to by the pastor. What she is and does not only affects the results of the pastor's work, but also has an independent influence far greater than that of other society leaders. And Mrs. Walker's influence was always of such a character that she could be accounted one of the wise women in whom the heart of the husband doth rejoice, one of the pious women who wisely work with those who labor for the Lord.

The churches in Wellfleet, Little Compton, R. I., Blackstone, Ashby, Assonet, Hampton and Warwick, Massachusetts, can all bear witness to

Mrs. Walker's faithfulness, wisdom and zeal. She loved the peoples among whom she was called to live, and in turn was loved by them. In these last years it was a constant delight to her to tell of the friendliness there had been between herself and the individuals whom she had known.

And this friendliness was not on her part a matter of word merely but also of deed and truth. In the years of her widowhood it was a pleasure to her during the summers to revisit as far as strength allowed the scenes of former service. In these pilgrimages she sought not merely her own pleasure but planned and labored for the good of those she loved. Only a few days before her death she received from Warwick, it was the last letter she was permitted to read, a letter conveying a vote of thanks for the assistance she had been to them in their efforts to beautify and refit their house of worship. Not only did they have the help of her sympathy and advice, but she, from her own purse,



provided new, complete and beautiful pulpit furnishings.

This illustrates Mrs. Walker's character. There was no place she loved as she did God's house, no people whom she honored as she did those set apart to the ministry of the church, and no cause that she held so sacred as she did the upbuilding of the kingdom of Christ. She was devoted to this with a devotion that consecrated to it the things most precious and sacred to her. If her children had survived their infancy she would have been one of the mothers in Israel who would have sent their sons and daughters to the difficult and dangerous parts of the field of the world to fight the battles of the Lord, and if they had fallen would have sorrowed more that she had not other children to give than because she was bereft. Her consecration was such that she delighted in devoting her most precious things to God. During the last long conversation I had with her she asked my advice as to the best way of making sure that

her husband's watch would go to some missionary who needed it and would appreciate it. It was a valuable watch, one that many would have thought they must keep because of its associations and its value, but because of its double value to her she all the more gladly laid it on the altar, all the more gladly sent it on its mission of helpful service.

All the ministers of all the churches have lost something by her passing; the ministers of the churches with which she has been connected as pastor's wife have lost more than the others; the pastor of this church at Wellfleet to which she was bound by the triple bond of her first confession, her first service as pastor's wife, and her renewed membership during these last years,—the minister of this church has lost the most of all. Her respect, sympathy and tactful acts of appreciation and help were ever a tower of strength and source of grace to him and his.

But the blow falls heaviest on the hearts of these brothers and sisters whose circle, so long

unbroken, has been so suddenly and rudely smitten. It is in these hearts that the sting is keenest, that the pain will last longest. Each heart among them knows its own bitterness, and we who as strangers dare not meddle therewith sympathize with them all and sorrow for them all, from the brother and sister who gladly received her in her widowhood to their home, and whose home she made glad, to the one who saw her least frequently of them all.

Yet while they sorrow together and we sorrow for them, they and we and all of us may rejoice that while the former things have passed away all things have not ceased to be. We can rejoice that she who loved us, and labored for us and offered her prayers in our behalf, has not ceased from her love and labor and petition but, that as she enters upon the life beyond she, with a purified affection, will continue her labor of intercession and that her prayers will have all the more of efficacy because that she no longer is subject to the errors of judgment of those who

because they are in the flesh can see only in part and know only in part, but with vision clarified by the heavenly light, where she sees as she is seen and knows as she is known, she offers the intercession which completely conforms to the will of Christ.

So while we sorrow, as it is natural for the heart to sorrow, because the "former things are passed away," we also rejoice because "all things are made new." Amen.





Yours truly  
Albert Howell.

